THE ETERNALS™

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

30¢ CC

13 JULY 02334

©1977 MARVEL COMICS GROUP

WHEN GODS WALK THE EARTH!

THE ETERNALS™

ONLY IN THE AWESOME ERA OF THE SPACE GOD'S RETURN COULD THIS ACTION SHOCKER HAPPEN!

"THE ASTRONAUTS!"

07 71486 02334 0

Strange events have exposed a startling fact, kept alive through the centuries only by myth and superstition—man is not alone on the evolutionary chain!! He has shared the planet with two species unknown to him! Now, in a sudden burst of violence, the Deviants have risen from their domain beneath the sea to challenge all humanity!! But mankind has unexpected allies—

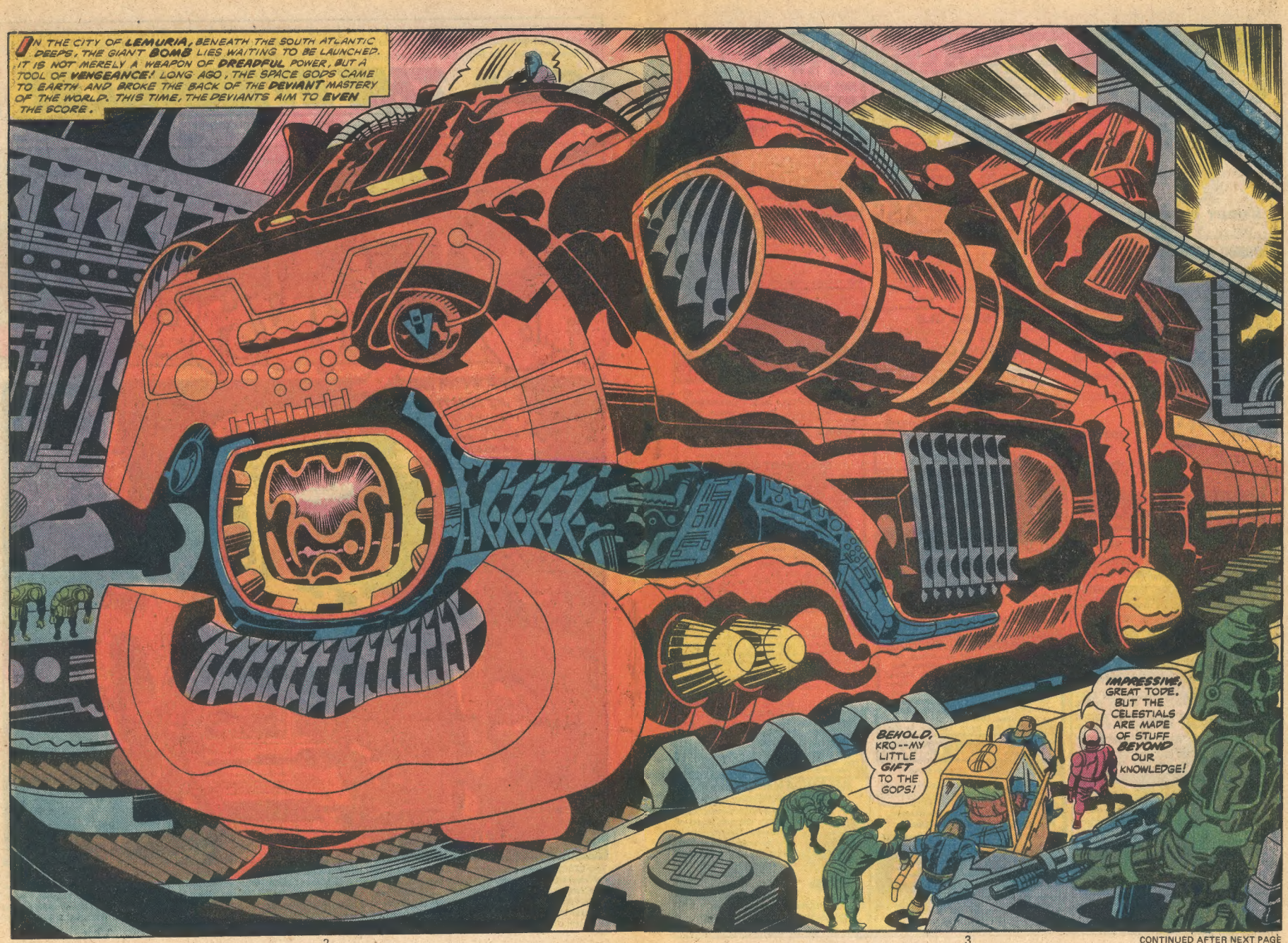
Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE ETERNALS!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • LETTERED AND INKED BY **MIKE ROYER** • COLORED BY **GLYNIS WEIN** • APPRECIATED BY **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

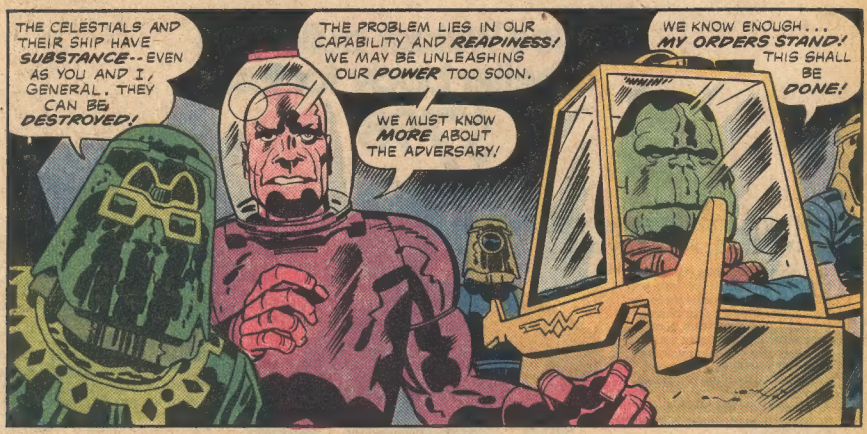
IMAGES ONCE CARVED ON STONE BY THE ANCIENT **INCAS**, HAVE COME TO LIFE! AND, WHAT'S MORE, THEY'VE COME TO EARTH! **THE SPACE GODS HAVE RETURNED!**... AND A NEW AWARENESS OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE HAS GRIPPED US IN THE WAKE OF THEIR ARRIVAL! **WHILE GIANT CELESTIALS NOW ROAM OUR WORLD, THEIR SPACECRAFT ORBITS THE PLANET!** THIS IS THE STORY OF THOSE WHO ARE SENT TO DEAL WITH THAT SPACECRAFT: THE

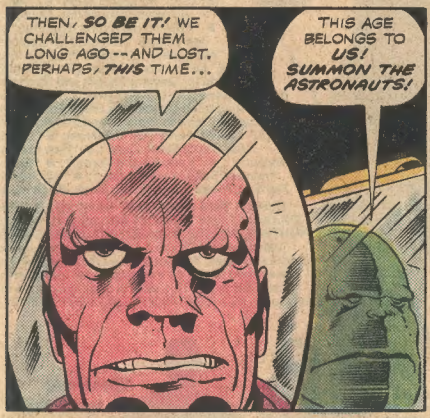
ASTRONAUTS!

THE ETERNALS™ is published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Published monthly. Copyright©1977 by Marvel Comics Group. A Division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1, No. 13, July, 1977 issue. Price 30¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $4.00 for 12 issues. Canada, $5.00. Foreign, $6.00. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. THE ETERNALS (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP.



CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE


THE CELESTIALS AND THEIR SHIP HAVE SUBSTANCE--EVEN AS YOU AND I, GENERAL. THEY CAN BE DESTROYED!
THE PROBLEM LIES IN OUR CAPABILITY AND READINESS! WE MAY BE UNLEASHING OUR POWER TOO SOON.
WE MUST KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ADVERSARY!
WE KNOW ENOUGH... MY ORDERS STAND! THIS SHALL BE DONE!


THEN, SO BE IT! WE CHALLENGED THEM LONG AGO--AND LOST. PERHAPS, THIS TIME...
THIS AGE BELONGS TO US! SUMMON THE ASTRONAUTS!

A HUGE DOOR OPENS AND THREE DEVIANTS EMERGE...
COME FORTH, BRAVE ONES!
WE OBEY, GREAT TODE. YOUR WORD IS OUR DESTINY!

MY WORD IS ABSOLUTE! ALL DEVIANTS LIVE AND DIE BY THE POWER OF MY WORD!
NOW... REVEAL ALL THAT HAS BEEN SAID TO YOU.
YES, SIRE.

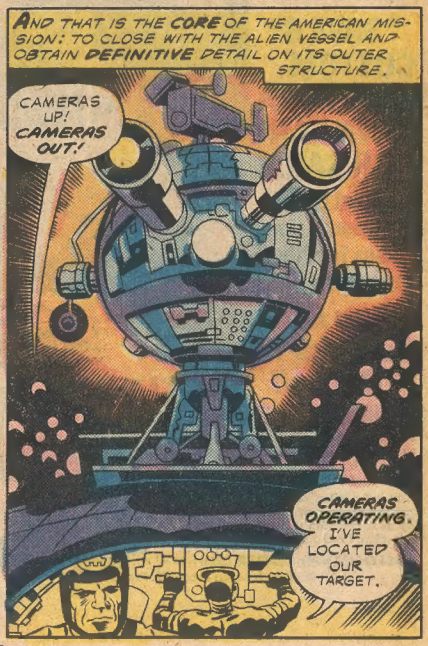
WE SHALL GUIDE THE ENERGY-BOMB INTO SPACE. IT WILL ACTIVATE AT A HEIGHT OF 500 MILES. AS IT GAINS KILL-POWER, WE SHALL INCREASE OUR SPEED AND REACH THE CELESTIAL CRAFT AT THE MOMENT OF DETONATION!

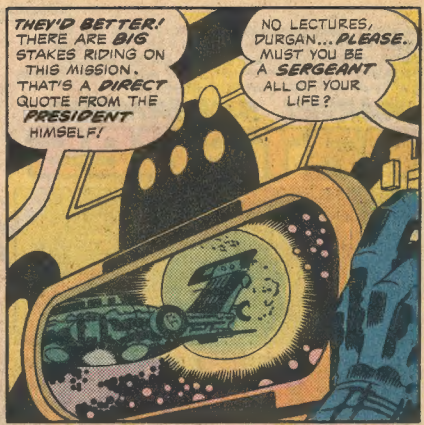
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

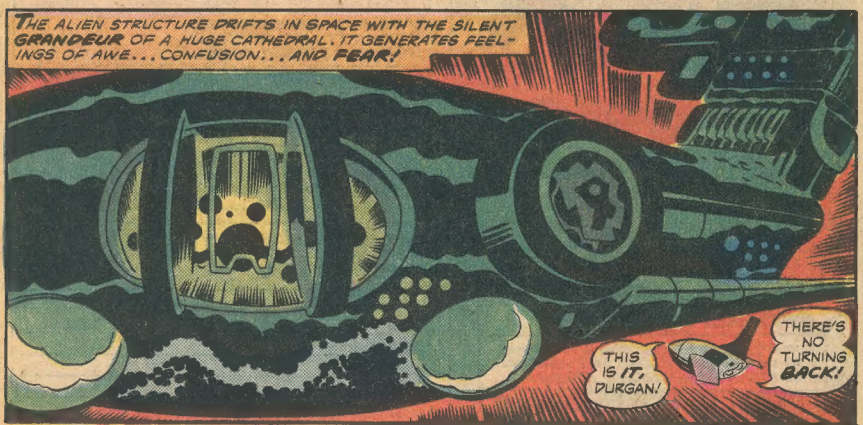
BUT THE DEVIANTS HAVE MADE THEIR RECKLESS MOVE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER SPACE FLIGHT NOW IN PROGRESS...
THIS NEW SHUTTLE JOB HANDLES LIKE A DREAM.
IT'S PERFECT FOR A QUICK SCAN MISSION.
USA
NASA

U.S. ASTRONAUTS TERRY PARKER AND MATT DURGAN HAVE LEFT CAPE CANAVERAL FAR BEHIND THEM. THEIR OBJECTIVE IS A MYSTERY MORE PUZZLING THAN THE FARTHEST PLANET...
SPACE GIANTS. WE'VE GOT TO SPY ON SPACE GIANTS! IT MAKES WALKING ON THE MOON SEEM LIKE NOSTALGIA.
YEAH. WHILE WE WERE BRIGHT-EYED AND BIG-CHESTED ABOUT SPACE TRAVEL, THE COMPETITION WAS ON ITS WAY TO US!

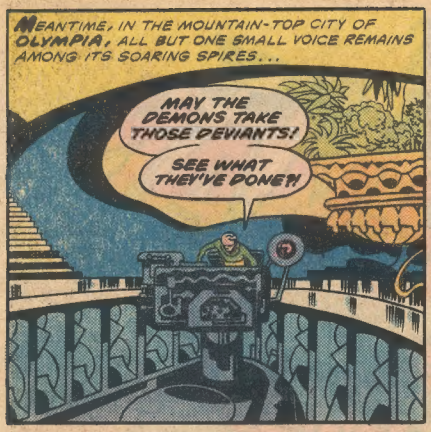
SPACE GIANTS... THEY'VE GOT A BASE IN THE ANDES, AND A CREW MARCHING ALL OVER OUR TURF!
DON'T FORGET THEIR ORBITING MAMA SHIP, MAN! I-I COULDN'T BELIEVE THOSE TELESCOPIC PHOTOS!

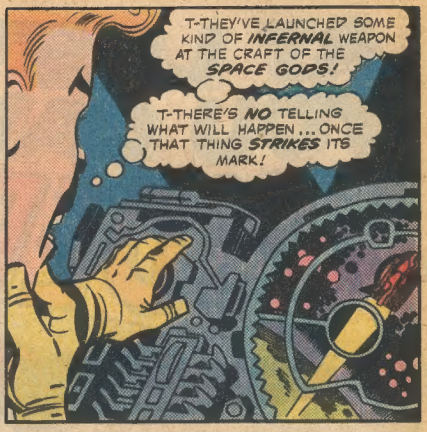

AND THAT IS THE CORE OF THE AMERICAN MISSION: TO CLOSE WITH THE ALIEN VESSEL AND OBTAIN DEFINITIVE DETAIL ON ITS OUTER STRUCTURE.
CAMERAS UP! CAMERAS OUT!
CAMERAS OPERATING. I'VE LOCATED OUR TARGET.

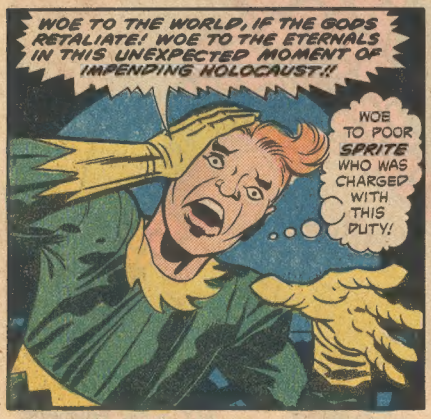


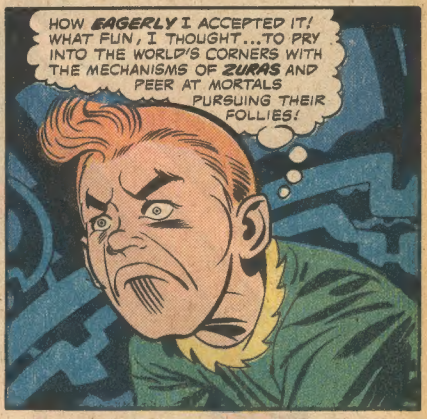


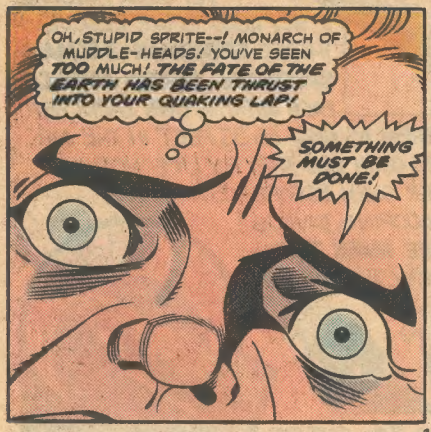
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

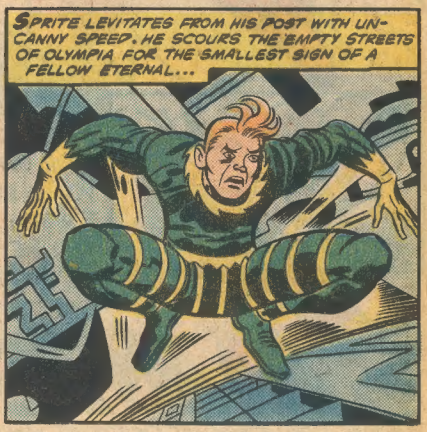

MEANTIME, IN THE MOUNTAIN-TOP CITY OF OLYMPIA, ALL BUT ONE SMALL VOICE REMAINS AMONG ITS SOARING SPIRES...
MAY THE DEMONS TAKE THOSE DEVIANTS!
SEE WHAT THEY'VE DONE?!

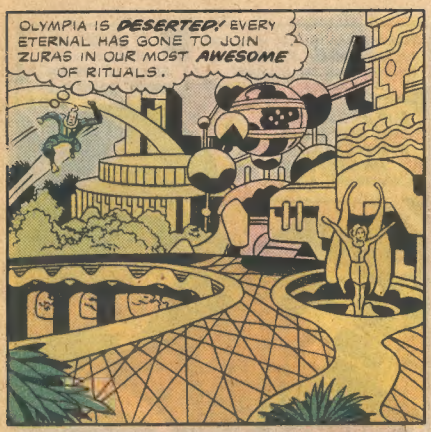

T-THEY'VE LAUNCHED SOME KIND OF INFERNAL WEAPON AT THE CRAFT OF THE SPACE GODS!
T-THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT WILL HAPPEN ... ONCE THAT THING STRIKES ITS MARK!

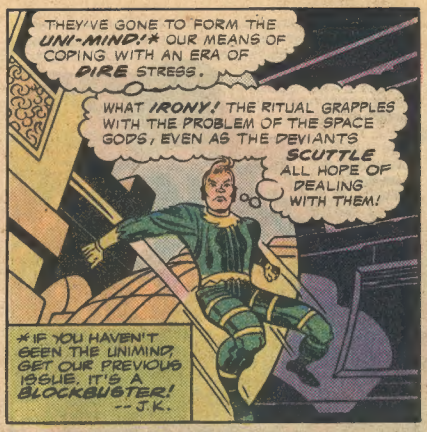

WOE TO THE WORLD, IF THE GODS RETALIATE! WOE TO THE ETERNALS IN THIS UNEXPECTED MOMENT OF IMPENDING HOLOCAUST!!
WOE TO POOR SPRITE WHO WAS CHARGED WITH THIS DUTY!

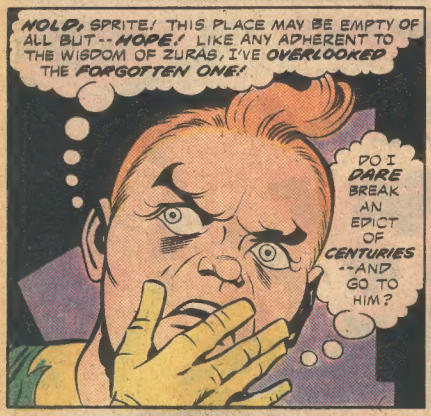

HOW EAGERLY I ACCEPTED IT! WHAT FUN, I THOUGHT...TO PRY INTO THE WORLD'S CORNERS WITH THE MECHANISMS OF ZURAS AND PEER AT MORTALS PURSUING THEIR FOLLIES!

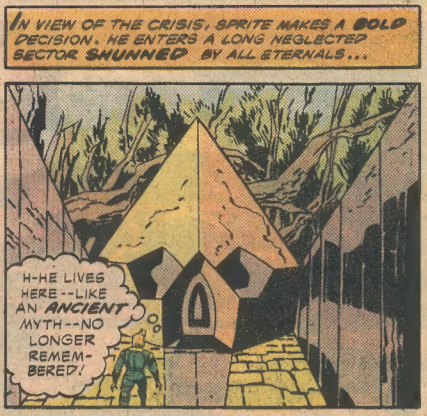

OH, STUPID SPRITE--! MONARCH OF MUDDLE-HEADS! YOU'VE SEEN TOO MUCH! THE FATE OF THE EARTH HAS BEEN THRUST INTO YOUR QUAKING LAP!
SOMETHING MUST BE DONE!


SPRITE LEVITATES FROM HIS POST WITH UNCANNY SPEED. HE SCOURS THE EMPTY STREETS OF OLYMPIA FOR THE SMALLEST SIGN OF A FELLOW ETERNAL...


OLYMPIA IS DESERTED! EVERY ETERNAL HAS GONE TO JOIN ZURAS IN OUR MOST AWESOME OF RITUALS.


THEY'VE GONE TO FORM THE UNI-MIND!* OUR MEANS OF COPING WITH AN ERA OF DIRE STRESS.
WHAT IRONY! THE RITUAL GRAPPLES WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE SPACE GODS, EVEN AS THE DEVIANTS SCUTTLE ALL HOPE OF DEALING WITH THEM!
*IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE UNIMIND, GET OUR PREVIOUS ISSUE. IT'S A BLOCKBUSTER! --J.K.


HOLD, SPRITE! THIS PLACE MAY BE EMPTY OF ALL BUT--HOPE! LIKE ANY ADHERENT TO THE WISDOM OF ZURAS, I'VE OVERLOOKED THE FORGOTTEN ONE!
DO I DARE BREAK AN EDICT OF CENTURIES --AND GO TO HIM?

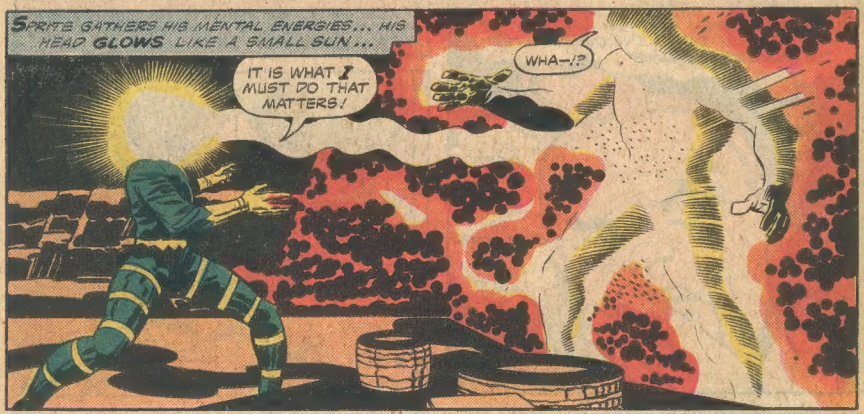

IN VIEW OF THE CRISIS, SPRITE MAKES A BOLD DECISION. HE ENTERS A LONG NEGLECTED SECTOR SHUNNED BY ALL ETERNALS...
H-HE LIVES HERE--LIKE AN ANCIENT MYTH--NO LONGER REMEMBERED!

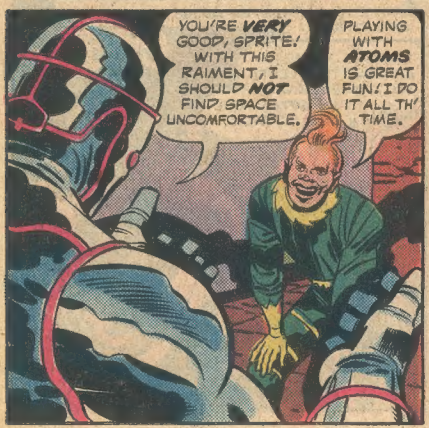
THEN...
I-I AM SPRITE. A GREAT URGENCY FORCES ME TO INTRUDE UPON YOU!
IF YOU HAVE NEED OF A HERO, I AM TOLD THAT THE TIME FOR ONE HAS LONG PAST!

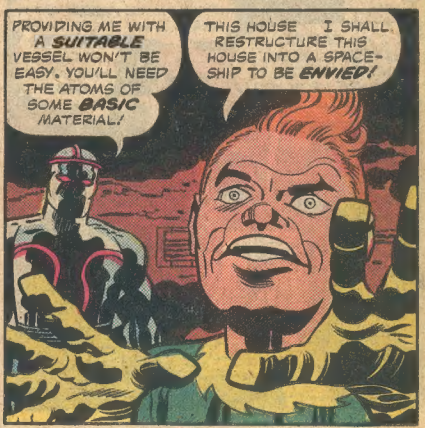
SPRITE IS UNDAUNTED AS HE EXPLAINS THE SITUATION...
YOU SEE, THERE IS LITTLE TIME LEFT! BUT, AN ETERNAL CAN STILL FOUL THIS ATTACK!
THE WILL OF ZURAS KEEPS ME HERE!

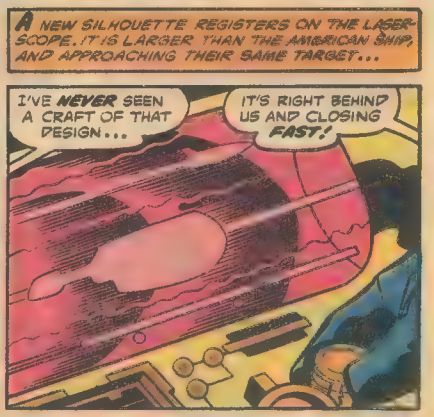
ONCE I ROAMED THE WORLD AMONG THE HUMANS AND SHOOK IT TO IMPROVE THEIR LOT. I TOPPLED THE PALACES OF TYRANTS AND SLEW THE BEASTS THEY COULD NOT CONQUER.
THE HUMANS KNEW ME BY MANY NAMES...BUT HERE, I HAVE NONE!

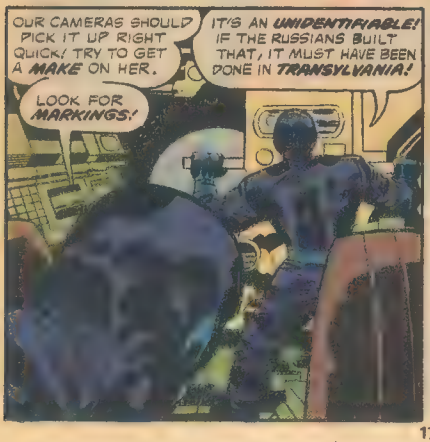
ZURAS BANISHED YOU FOR YOUR PRIDE! YOUR WILL TO MEDDLE IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.
IF ZURAS IS ABSENT--HIS EDICT IS ABSENT. WHAT MUST I DO?
BUT I CALL UPON YOU FOR YOUR STRENGTH...AND ONE UNSELFISH UNIVERSAL ACT...


SPRITE GATHERS HIS MENTAL ENERGIES... HIS HEAD GLOWS LIKE A SMALL SUN...
IT IS WHAT I MUST DO THAT MATTERS!
WHA--!?

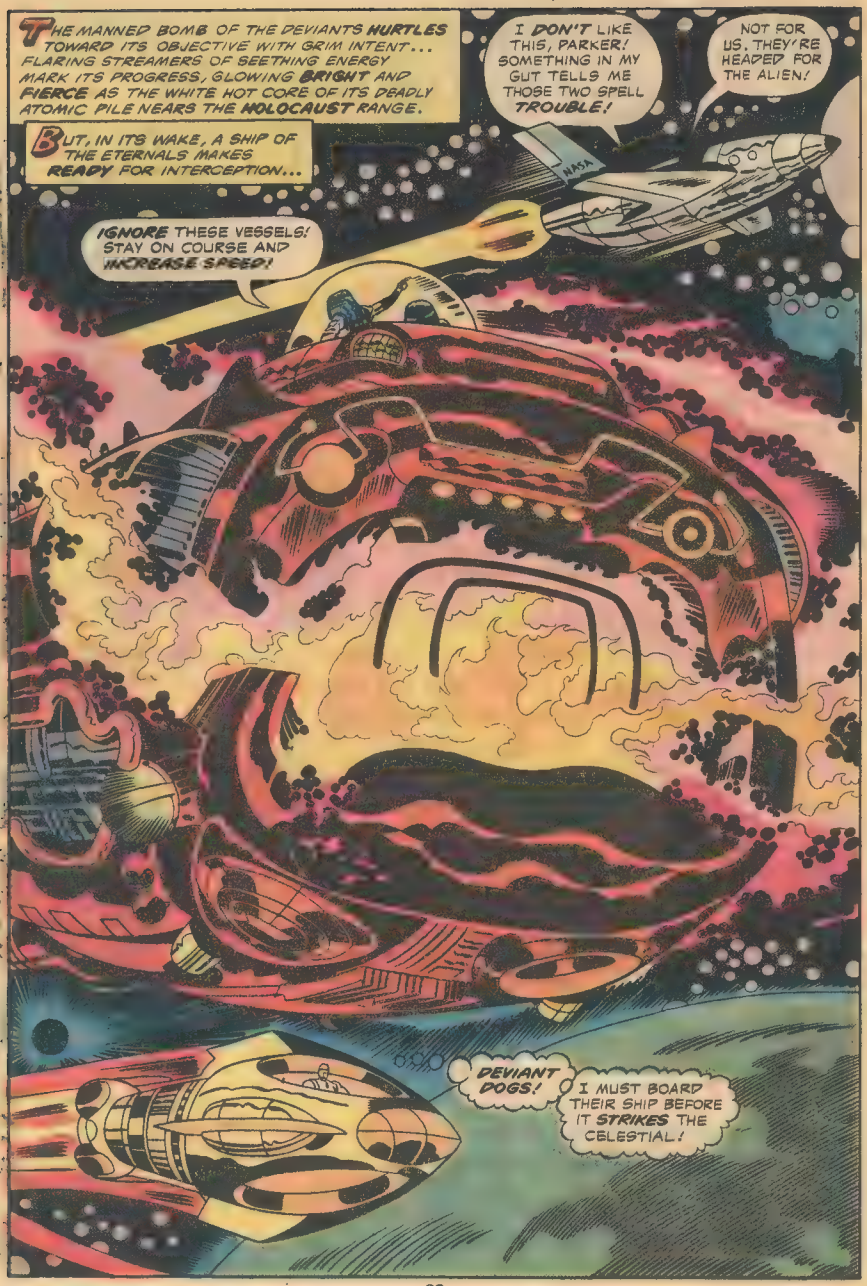

YOU'RE VERY GOOD, SPRITE! WITH THIS RAIMENT, I SHOULD NOT FIND SPACE UNCOMFORTABLE.
PLAYING WITH ATOMS IS GREAT FUN! I DO IT ALL TH' TIME.

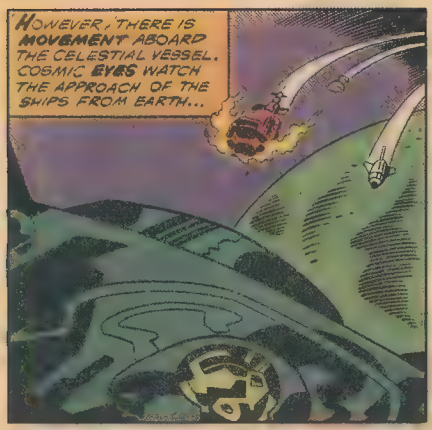

PROVIDING ME WITH A SUITABLE VESSEL WON'T BE EASY. YOU'LL NEED THE ATOMS OF SOME BASIC MATERIAL!
THIS HOUSE I SHALL RESTRUCTURE THIS HOUSE INTO A SPACE-SHIP TO BE ENVIED!

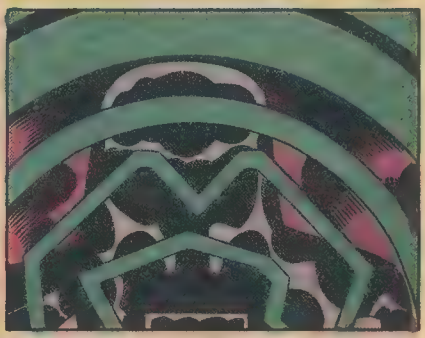


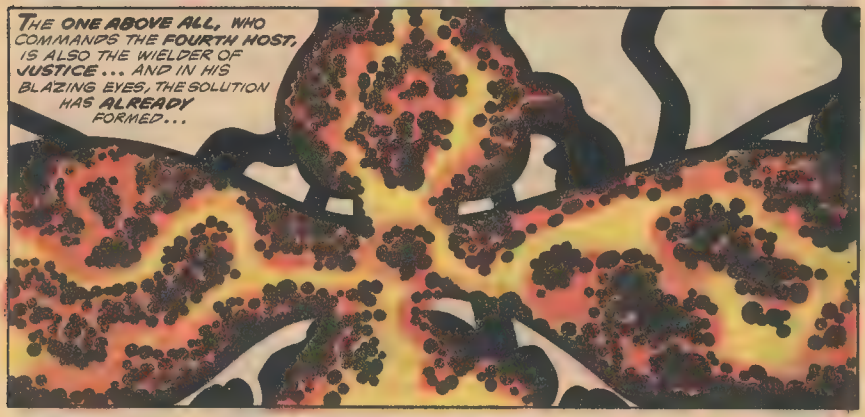


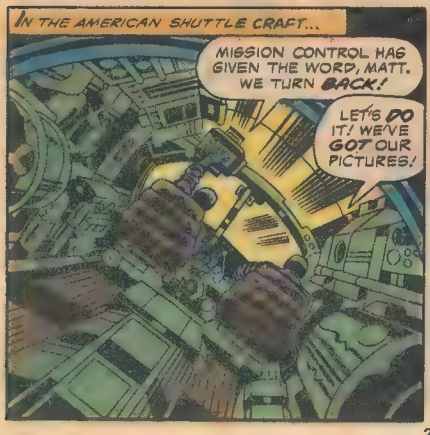
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

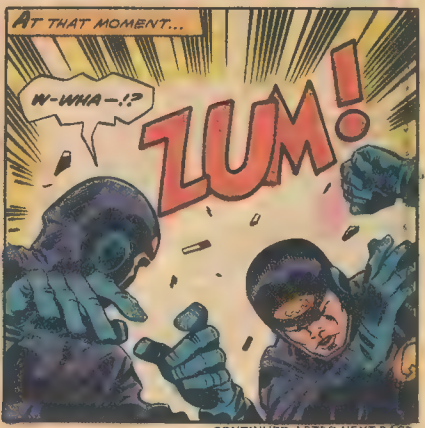

THE MANNED BOMB OF THE DEVIANTS HURTLES TOWARD ITS OBJECTIVE WITH GRIM INTENT... FLARING STREAMERS OF SEETHING ENERGY MARK ITS PROGRESS, GLOWING BRIGHT AND FIERCE AS THE WHITE HOT CORE OF ITS DEADLY ATOMIC PILE NEARS THE HOLOCAUST RANGE.
I DON'T LIKE THIS, PARKER! SOMETHING IN MY GUT TELLS ME THOSE TWO SPELL TROUBLE!
NOT FOR US. THEY'RE HEADED FOR THE ALIEN!
NASA
BUT, IN ITS WAKE, A SHIP OF THE ETERNALS MAKES READY FOR INTERCEPTION...
IGNORE THESE VESSELS! STAY ON COURSE AND INCREASE SPEED!
DEVIANT DOGS!
I MUST BOARD THEIR SHIP BEFORE IT STRIKES THE CELESTIAL!











CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS UNEXPLAINABLE AS WELL AS FRIGHTENING...

LOOK! H-HOW DID THEY GET INTO THE SHIP?!

HUMANS! W-WE'VE BEEN TRANSPORTED INTO THEIR CRAFT!

CAREFUL, MATT... THEY APPEAR HOSTILE!

THEY ARE HOSTILE! THEY'RE USING THEIR WEAPONS!

CUT THAT OUT! WHO ARE YOU GUYS?!

SUBJECTS OF GREAT TODE... RULER OF THE DEVIANTS!

POW!

KILL THEM! TAKE THEIR VESSEL!

TOO LATE! THE HUMANS ARE FADING LIKE CURSED PHANTOMS!

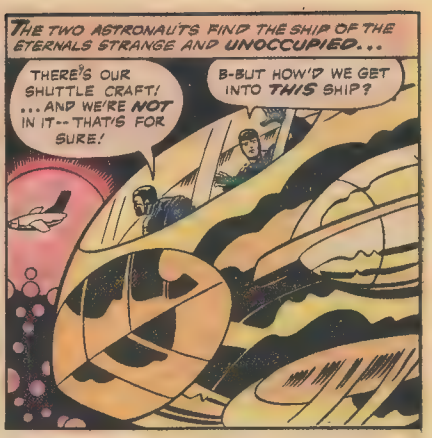
SEE FOR YOURSELF!

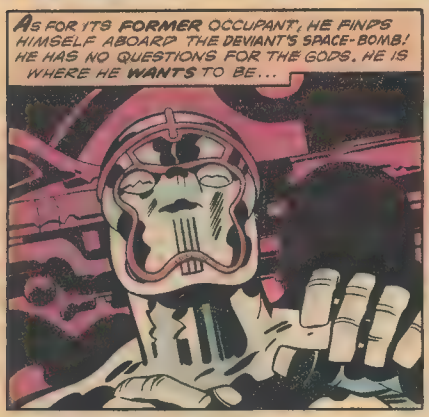
WIDE-EYED WITH WONDER, THE DEVIANTS WATCH AS THE AMERICANS VANISH IN A BRIGHT FLASH OF LIGHT...

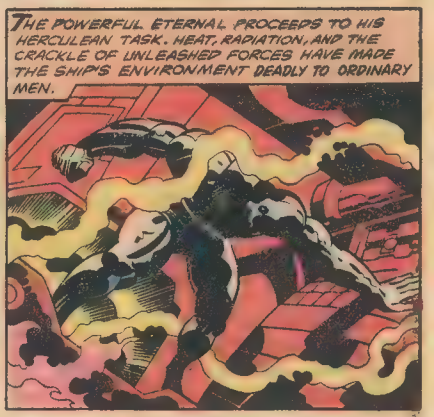
ZUM!

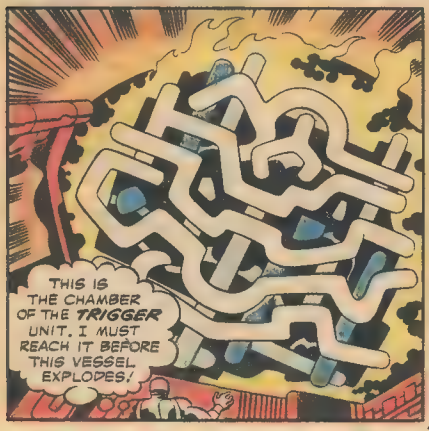
INCREDIBLE! THEY'RE GONE!

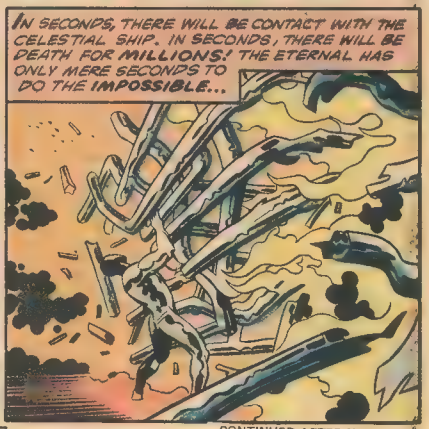
THIS CAN ONLY BE THE WORK OF THE SPACE GODS!









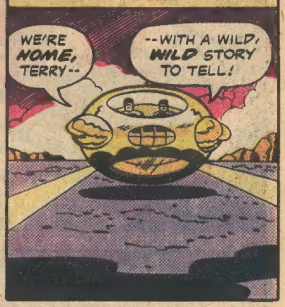


CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

IT IS AN HOUR WHEN THE IMPOSSIBLE HAS SUDDENLY BECOME **INCREDIBLE REALITY!** AT A SECRET **NASA** AIRFIELD IN THE MOJAVE DESERT, THE RETURN OF THE AMERICAN ASTRONAUTS IS **EAGERLY** AWAITED...

A VEHICLE IS **SIGHTED.** A VEHICLE IS **TRACKED.** A VEHICLE ASSUMES ITS GLIDE-PATH AND PREPARES TO **LAND!** MATT DURGAN AND TERRY PARKER HAVE COME BACK FROM SPACE!

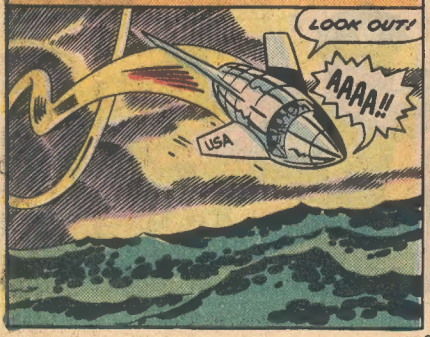
ALTHOUGH THEIR CRAFT IS **NOT** THE ONE IN WHICH THEY DEPARTED, THE AMERICANS HAVE HAD **NO** DIFFICULTY IN OPERATING IT... ONCE THEY DISCOVERED THAT IT COULD BE GUIDED IN BY THE POWER OF **THOUGHT** ALONE...



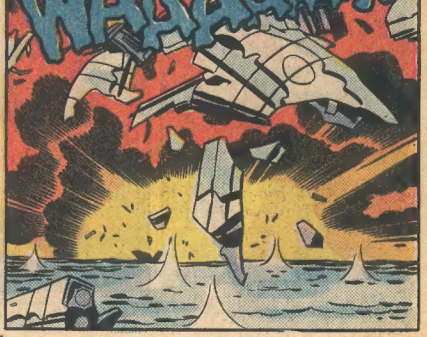
THE BARREN LANDING STRIP IS SOON OVERRUN BY A **VARIED** REPRESENTATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES. THEY STARE UNBELIEVINGLY AT THE **PHENOMENON** BEFORE THEM...

AN EXPLANATION WILL BE MADE, BUT IT WILL BECOME THE CAUSE OF CONSTERNATION AND DOUBT AND **NOT** DEBATE. HOWEVER, THE AMERICANS **WILL** HAVE WHAT THEY **WANTED**-- A REPORT FROM SPACE, AND TWO SAFE ASTRONAUTS...

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE OVER THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN, THE **DEVIANTS** ATTEMPT A LANDING IN THE SHUTTLE PLANE. UNACQUAINTED WITH ITS CONTROLS, THEY BARREL IN AT HIGH SPEED TOWARD THE CHOPPY WATERS...



THE RESULTANT **CRASH** IS HEARD FOR MILES AT SEA...



HAVING EMBARKED ON A MISSION OF **SUICIDE** AND **MASS DESTRUCTION** THE DEVIANTS ACHIEVE THEIR END ON A **SMALLER** SCALE THAN THEY MAY HAVE DESIRED...

HOWEVER, IT IS THE LONE **ETERNAL** WHO FINISHES HIS TASK IN TRUE GRANDIOSE FASHION. THE **WRECKED** DEVIANT BOMB CAREENS OFF INTO SPACE LIKE A BLAZING PYRE--SELF-CONSUMING AND SPECTACULAR TO WITNESS.

CENTURIES OF ISOLATION **HAVEN'T** CHANGED THIS ETERNAL. A LEGENDARY **HERO** TO THE HUMANS, HE HAS LIVED UP TO HIS CALLING WITH **FULL** MEASURE.

NOW, HE DRIFTS FREE OF THE **FLAMING** WRECKAGE, UNTIL HIS INJURED BODY IS DRAWN INTO THE GIANT CELESTIAL SHIP. THERE IT RESTS... UNABLE TO FUNCTION... SMASHED BY AN ORDEAL OF **INDESCRIBABLE** LIMITS. THUS, WHEN THE HAND OF THE ONE ABOVE ALL REACHES FOR HIM, HIS FORM IS LIKE A FLEA IN ITS SHADOW. HOWEVER, HE IS A FLEA PROVEN **WORTHY OF THE GODS!!**

NEXT: AMAZING ACTION!

KARUS BATTLES THE COSMIC-POWERED HULK

ETERNAL UTTERINGS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Armadillo,

I thought I'd write and compliment *you*. You've been around quite awhile, and have no doubt "listened" to a lot of praise of various comics, artists, writers, etc., but who's complimented you? If anyone has, I don't remember—and I think it's high time somebody did! You do great columns. You make them interesting, even (miracle of miracles) fun! I insist you give yourself a no-prize. You deserve it! All I can say is...*thanks*.

Since I'm sending this to "Eternal Utterings," I should mention ETERNALS. I've been following the series since the celebrated first ish, and all I can say is—*it's great!*

Pam Johnson
929 Lake Street, Venice, CA 90291

Aw, heck, Pam—y'know us armadillo types are suckers for flattery. We just couldn't pass up a lonely paean to our personal honor—but to award ourselves one of those elusive no-prizes would be sheer unadulterated self-indulgence. Thanks for the sentiments, though!

Dear gang:

If the Olympian gods are Eternals, then what are the Asgardian gods?

Bob Atherton
1223 N. 66th Street, Omaha, NB 68132

Immortals.

Dear Jack, Mike, and Bullpen:

This book is my favorite of Jack's four series—I'm quite fond of it. This type of science-fiction fantasy is a big favorite of mine and Jack's been creating some great characters and plots. Even the ultra-heavy and corny writing which grates me so in CAPTAIN AMERICA seems to add to the excitement here. However, this book could be made a lot better if Jack somehow unified the characters and solidified the direction of the book. Over the first nine issues, Jack has been spinning in every direction at once, creating new characters and situations. This has resulted in having the characters and the focus of the book spread in about four or five different areas, such as Olympia, the Deviants' Lemuria, the spot where the series started, New York, and wherever the gods of the Fourth Host pop up. Tie up some of the loose ends, Jack, and give us a solid group of characters. As it is now, we don't know where the next issue will take place. Let's see some direction in the book. But when you're dropping characters, don't drop Ikaris, Makarri, Margo, Sersi, Thena, Sprite, Kro, the Reject, or Ajak. They're favorites in the cast. Or did I just list the entire cast?

Larry Twiss
227 Fox Run
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Sirrah:

Seldom have I seen a letter of criticism so lucidly presented as that by Vallard Eding in ETERNALS #8. I agree: Economic pressures have eaten away at the size of the comic book, and grandiose large-paneled epics of the kind Kirby was renowned for simply can't work anymore; they appear skimpy, over-simplified and take months to tell a simple story. But I wish to add another aspect of my own, which ties into a second point Vallard made:

Eding said, "Jack the writer and Jack the artist lose something by working together." I feel this is because "Jack the writer" is different, in both his conception of storytelling and his conception of characterization, from the man with whom he used to work: Stan Lee. Stan's stories were rich in characterization; whether hero, villain, or innocent bystander, they each had a personality of their own. There were interactions between characters: love, fear, grudges among the members of a super-hero group. And most importantly, Stan gave each and every character a motivation for his or her actions, which is what made the heroes heroic, and the villains vile.

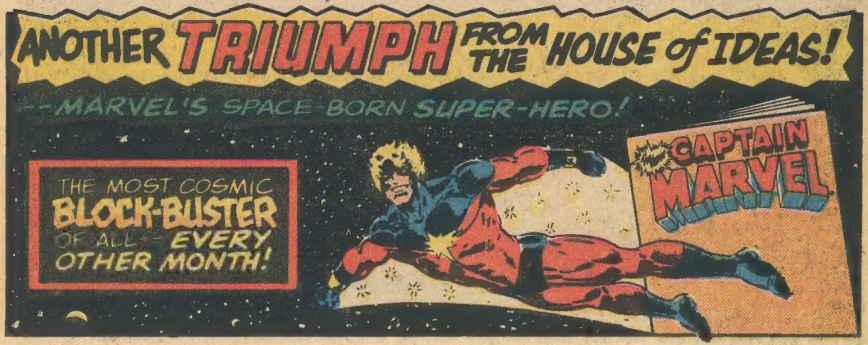
But Jack Kirby lives in a world almost entirely devoid of such characterization. His stories have no villains. Oh sure, there are people who oppose the hero, but they're never *villains*. They have no motivations, other than making things tough for the hero, and they're not allowed to stand their moral ground and see themselves as being right in their own eyes. Kro is not a villain; he is little more than bravado. He has no purpose, except to be a pain in the neck to Ikaris. Jack's is a world where the heroes never argue with one another, where nobody ever dies, where everything is larger-than-life and "reality" is only a word to be looked up in a dictionary.

Like Vallard, I am an immense admirer of Kirby's art, and all that I have said is said with all due love of the man and his work. But in most instances (the notable exception being Jim Starlin's WARLOCK strip), the artist who tries to turn out his own stories tends to spread his talents too thin, and the entire work comes out weaker as a result.

Hopefully, something can be done to rectify matters. We so desperately need the Kirby magic; all of us do.

Mark Alan Joplin
55 Sutter #143, San Francisco, CA 94104

Some of your points may be well-taken, Mark—but as ol' Smiley himself has said on several occasions, it's the Mighty Marvel tradition to make our madcap mavens of evil *more* than mere villains...even occasionally to make them sympathetic (witness the Mole Man, among others). Thus, Jolly Jack's rather charitable characterization of Kro is quite in keeping with our longtime policy in such malevolent matters. *Kapish?* (As they say.)



scanned by *Wizard*